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**Food and Nutrition Service
National School Lunch Program
Fiscal Years 2013-2014**

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

REVISED JULY 29, 2013

**DIRECT CERTIFICATION
IMPROVEMENT GRANTS**

*States are required to use this solicitation to apply for the
Direct Certification Improvement Grants*

Grant Type	Application Due Date (if funds remain available)	Maximum per Award
TIER 1 – Simplified Application for Limited-Scope Planning & Implementation Grants (up to 1 year grants)	<u>Revision: New Dates</u> October 1, 2013 January 2, 2014 April 1, 2014 July 1, 2014	\$150,000
TIER 2 Application for Full-Scope Implementation Grants (1 to 3 year grants)	<u>Revision: New Dates</u> October 1, 2013 January 2, 2014 April 1, 2014 July 1, 2014	\$1,000,000

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number 10.579

National School Lunch Program
Fiscal Year 2013-2014
Request for Applications for Direct Certification Improvement Grants

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National School Lunch Program
Fiscal Year 2013-2014
Request for Applications for Direct Certification Improvement Grants

I. OVERVIEW

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service invites State agencies that administer the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) to apply for Direct Certification Improvement Grants to fund the costs of improving their direct certification rates with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and other assistance programs as allowed under Federal statute and regulations. Under this request for applications (RFA), approximately **\$8 million** is available for grants to NSLP State agencies to fund direct certification improvement projects.

A. Background and Authority

The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, Public Law 108-265, required all local educational agencies (LEAs) to establish, by school year (SY) 2008-2009, a system to directly certify children as eligible for free school meals when they are members of households that receive SNAP benefits. Under direct certification, children are approved for school meal benefits automatically without an application from the child's household. Direct certification normally is accomplished through data matching between school enrollment records and public assistance program eligibility records.

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill, P.L. 110-246) required FNS to assess the effectiveness of State and local efforts to directly certify children for free school meals when they are members of households receiving SNAP, and to provide annual reports to Congress indicating State progress in this area. Each year since 2008, FNS has computed direct certification rates for each State using estimates of the number of school-age SNAP participants (between ages 5 and 17) and the number of children from SNAP households directly certified as eligible for free school meals. These rates have been published in the annual Report to Congress: *Direct Certification in the National School Lunch Program: State Implementation Progress*. The national average direct certification rate for children in SNAP households for SY 2011-2012 was calculated as 86 percent, an increase of 9 percentage points from the 77 percent reported for the previous school year. The Reports to Congress for 2008 through 2012 (**note: next report will be published in the fall of 2013**) are available at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/ora/menu/Published/CNP/cnp.htm>.

Section 749(h) of the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-80) provided \$22 million that the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) must issue as grants to State agencies that administer the NSLP and have the lowest rates of children directly certified for free meals, for the purpose of improving those rates. State agencies may use grant funds, in accordance with FNS requirements, to pay costs associated with improving their direct certification rates. Under this appropriation, in July 2010, FNS announced an RFA for State agencies to apply for Direct Certification planning and implementation grants. Applications in response to the 2010 RFA were accepted on a quarterly basis from November 2010 through July 2012, and FNS awarded 31 grants to 21 State agencies,

totaling approximately \$14 million in grant funding. FNS now is issuing a new Direct Certification Improvement Grant opportunity to make available to States approximately **\$8 million** in remaining funds to be used for direct certification improvements.

B. Purpose of Grant Funding

The Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA) of 2010 (P.L. 111-296) amended the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (NSLA) to add provisions intended to encourage States to improve program access through direct certification, including:

1. Requiring States to reach percentage benchmarks for direct certification rates for children in households receiving assistance under SNAP according to the following timelines:
 - 80% for SY 2011-2012;
 - 90% for SY 2012-2013; and
 - 95% for SY 2013-2014 and each school year thereafter.
2. Requiring States that fall below the benchmark for the previous school year to develop and implement continuous improvement plans (CIPs) to describe: 1) specific measures that the State will use to identify more children who are eligible for direct certification, including improvements or modifications to technology, information systems, or databases; 2) a timeline for the State to implement those measures; and 3) goals for the State to improve direct certification results.

The purpose of the Direct Certification Improvement Grants described in this RFA is to fund State agency activities in planning and implementing direct certification improvement projects that will help them **reach and maintain the direct certification rate benchmarks** mandated by the HHFKA. Funds may be used for:

1. Making technology improvements;
2. Providing technical assistance to LEAs; or
3. Implementing new or revised State or LEA direct certification systems.

In addition, the grants are intended to fund improvements in direct certification with other public programs where there is statutory authority for direct certification, such as Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), foster care, migrants, homeless, etc. Ultimately, FNS intends for the grants to assist States in improving access, increasing accuracy, and reducing paperwork in the NSLP and SBP by simplifying the certification process for free school meals.

Using Grant Funds for Direct Certification with Medicaid

Applicants may propose to use a portion of the grant funds for activities related to direct certification with Medicaid. However, the use of grant funds for this purpose will be restricted to State agencies that apply for a grant to improve their direct certification rate with SNAP **and** are selected to participate in the demonstration projects to evaluate direct certification with Medicaid, as described in FNS Memorandum SP 8-2013, *Request for Applications for Participation in Demonstration Projects to Evaluate Direct Certification with Medicaid*. This memorandum, along with attachments, is located at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/governance/policy.htm>.

C. FNS Collaboration with State Grantees

FNS intends to work collaboratively with grant applicants and grantees throughout the application process and the life of grants awarded through this RFA. Accordingly, within approximately three weeks of this RFA's publication, FNS will conduct a webinar with all State agencies and FNS regional offices to review the RFA and address questions regarding the application process. Notification of the webinar date, time and call-in information will be communicated to State agencies via the Child Nutrition Division's PartnerWeb community at <https://www.partnerweb.usda.gov>.

FNS anticipates awarding the funds as cooperative agreements to allow FNS more active participation with the cooperator during both project development and project execution. Examples of FNS participation include activities such as the following:

1. Ongoing evaluation of quarterly progress and financial reports to monitor the grantee's project activities to ensure that the objectives, terms and conditions of the agreement are met;
2. Periodic on-site and off-site technical assistance to provide evaluation and guidance on project activities and outputs as they relate to child nutrition program objectives, including: providing program guidance on curriculum development; evaluation of training materials and websites; evaluation of technology improvements; review of project plans and milestones; review of procurement documents for sub-grantee involvement (i.e., requests for proposals, contracts, statements of work, and project plans) and other technical assistance related to project objectives; and
3. Periodic collaborative meetings for multiple grantees for the purposes of technical assistance, training, problem solving and sharing successful or promising practices. Meetings may be conducted as webinars, teleconferences or training workshops at a program related conference.

Summaries of Direct Certification grants that were awarded under the previous 2010 RFA are located on the FNS Child Nutrition Division grants website at:
http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Grants/2010dc_grantsummaries.htm.

II. DIRECT CERTIFICATION IMPROVEMENT GRANT TYPES

The **FY 2013-2014** Direct Certification Improvement Grant award process involves two types of awards. State agencies may apply for only one grant award under this RFA.

1. Tier 1: Limited-scope planning and implementation projects - up to \$150,000
2. Tier 2: Full-scope implementation projects - up to \$1,000,000

State agencies may apply for **only one grant award** during the extension year of the **RFA-- October 1, 2013 through July 1, 2014**.

- **States that applied for a Tier 1 grant in the original RFA period (February 1 through July 1, 2013) may apply for a second Tier 1 or for a Tier 2 award during the extended RFA period (October 1, 2013 through July 1, 2014).**

- States that applied for a Tier 2 grant in the original RFA period (February 1 through July 1, 2013) may not receive a second Tier 2 award, but may apply for a Tier 1 award under the extended period.
- No more than one application will be accepted from any State agency in any single fiscal year, and no more than two grants--two Tier 1 grants, or one Tier 1 and one Tier 2--will be awarded to any State agency over all the application periods of this RFA combined (February 1, 2013 through July 1, 2014).

Examples are given in the following chart (written with the assumption that all applications will lead to approved awards, unless withdrawn by the State):

Situation	State may apply for a <u>Tier 1</u> grant during RFA Extension - Oct 1, 2013 through July 1, 2014	State may apply for a <u>Tier 2</u> grant during the RFA Extension - Oct 1, 2013 through July 1, 2014	State may apply for <u>both</u> a Tier 1 and a Tier 2 grant during the RFA Extension - Oct 1, 2013 through July 1, 2014
State applied for a <u>Tier 1</u> grant in the RFA period Feb 1, 2013 through July 1, 2013	Yes	Yes	No
State applied for a <u>Tier 2</u> grant in the RFA period Feb 1, 2013 through July 1, 2013	Yes	No	No
State did not apply for a Tier 1 or Tier 2 grant in the RFA period Feb 1, 2013 through July 1, 2013	Yes	Yes	No

A. Tier 1: Limited-Scope Planning and Implementation Grants - up to \$150,000

Tier 1 grants may be awarded for up to **\$150,000** under a simplified application process to fund short term projects of limited scope for the distinct purpose of improving direct certification rates. Please note that **funding is limited to no more than \$75,000 for planning activities**. If a State agency proposes to conduct both planning and implementation activities under the grant, the proposed budget must clearly delineate between the costs associated with planning and the costs associated with implementation to ensure that planning costs do not exceed \$75,000.

Tier 1 grants may have a performance period of **up to one year** and are intended to pay the costs of direct certification improvement activities, such as one or a combination of the following:

1. Planning activities (limited to no more than \$75,000 in costs for planning only), including acquiring expert assistance in:
 - assessing and analyzing direct certification processes and systems to identify and prioritize needed improvements and plan for implementation; and
 - developing continuous improvement plans (CIPs), as required for States that do not meet the mandated direct certification benchmarks;
2. Upgrades, add-ons or other enhancements to existing direct certification systems and processes;

3. Purchase of new software or hardware for direct certification purposes;
4. Training LEAs to target specific known problem areas in the direct certification process;
or
5. Some combination of the above.

For example, a State agency may have a good direct certification system in place, but needs to engage in short-term projects of limited scope to add a new feature or make one or more adjustments, such as, but not limited to:

1. Increasing match frequency;
2. Adding data elements or new algorithms for more accurate data matching;
3. Adding/improving online lookup capability;
4. Improving data exchange processes with SNAP and TANF agencies;
5. Creating/updating software and reporting tools;
6. Making changes necessary to comply with revised Federal reporting requirements for direct certification data;
7. Simplifying LEA access to data matches;
8. Adding or improving ability to identify other children in the household who are categorically eligible for free meals due to SNAP/TANF/FDPIR eligibility of at least one household member;
9. Prioritizing unmatched results for easier processing;
10. Purchasing hardware or software for direct certification purposes. Software and hardware purchases may be for use by the NSLP State agency, by LEAs within their State, or by SNAP/TANF agencies for the purpose of direct certification;
11. Conducting training with LEAs to improve performance in accessing and processing data matches timely and accurately;
12. Adding or improving monitoring capability so the State agency can assess direct certification performance; or
13. Other targeted efforts to improve current direct certification systems and processes.

To develop an application for a Tier 1 grant, State agencies must address the questions in the ***Appendix C: Tier 1 Limited-Scope Grant Proposal Template & Instructions***. The instructions are designed to assist State agencies in developing fully responsive Tier 1 grant applications for viable projects of limited scope and to bring consistency to the proposal process for evaluation purposes.

The maximum amount of any single Tier 1 grant is **\$150,000**. However, FNS retains authority to award less than the amount requested in the application. **Tier 1 grant applications proposing planning activities may not include more than \$75,000 in the project budget for costs related to planning activities and these costs must be clearly explained and separated from implementation activities in the project budget.** Regardless of the activities proposed, applicants must provide sufficient documentation to explain and justify all grant project cost

estimates to establish that they are reasonable, necessary, allowable and allocable to the purpose of these grants.

B. Tier 2: Full-Scope Implementation Grants – Up to \$1,000,000

Tier 2 full-scope implementation grants may be awarded for up to **\$1,000,000** to fund direct certification implementation projects with a performance period of **one to three years**. These grants are for the purpose of supporting State agencies in carrying out projects of significant scope to improve direct certification performance. Tier 2 grants are intended for States that already know what they need to do to improve, but lack the resources to implement the improvements. Planning activities, such as system analysis, process assessments, and CIP development are not acceptable activities for these full-scope implementation grants. In order to develop a reasonable proposal for a project of this larger scope, FNS assumes that State agencies already have completed assessment and planning activities and are prepared to move forward with an implementation project.

Tier 2 grants may fund major training and technology improvements (for example, a major re-write of the State's direct certification system to move from district-level matching to State-level matching, or similar scope) or combinations of improvement activities that will exceed \$150,000 in total cost. Potential uses of Tier 2 grant funds include any of the implementation activities listed in Section II-A for Tier 1 grants (except for planning activities), as well as more extensive implementation projects to implement new direct certification technologies and training.

Applicant agencies must address the questions in the ***Appendix D: Tier 2 - Full-Scope Grant Proposal Template & Instructions*** to develop an implementation grant application. Appendix D instructions and tips are designed to 1) guide applicants in thinking through all aspects of implementing proposed solutions, with particular emphasis on reducing risks associated with technology related aspects of their proposals, and 2) assist applicants in considering and capturing budget items such as, but not limited to, costs for personnel, contractors, purchasing equipment, developing training, supplies and travel. Following the guidance will assist State agencies to develop fully responsive implementation grant applications, and help to bring consistency to the proposal process for evaluation purposes.

The maximum amount of any single full-scope implementation grant is **\$1,000,000**. However, FNS retains authority to award less than the amount requested by an applicant. The size of implementation grants will likely vary, based on differences in project scope, the responsiveness of application packages (see **Section VI, What to Include in the Application Package**), and clarity of demonstrated need. Regardless of the activities proposed, applicants must provide sufficient documentation to explain and justify all grant project cost estimates to establish that they are reasonable, necessary, allowable and allocable to the purpose of these grants.

III. WHO MAY APPLY

Per Section 749(h) of the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-80), grants are available to State agencies that administer the NSLP and have the lowest direct certification rates for children who are members of households receiving SNAP benefits. Because of the statutory mandate under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act for States to **reach** and **maintain** direct certification rates with SNAP of at least 95 percent, and due to the number of recent and upcoming changes in

direct certification policy and procedures which may require adjustments to State and local direct certification systems (i.e., elimination of SNAP letter method as a method of direct certification, pending changes in direct certification reporting requirements, mandated increase in frequency for running matches, continuous improvement plans, etc.), this grant opportunity is extended to all States, as follows:

1. **All NSLP State agencies** are eligible to apply for **Tier 1** Direct Certification Improvement Grants, even if they were awarded grant(s) under the 2010 Direct Certification Grant RFA. However, applications must clearly demonstrate the State's need for grant funds to enable it to reach and maintain SNAP direct certification rates at the 95 percent level.
2. **All NSLP State agencies** are eligible to apply for **Tier 2** Direct Certification Improvement Grants, even if they were awarded grant(s) under the 2010 Direct Certification Grant RFA. However, State agencies with direct certification rates with SNAP that are already at 95 percent or higher, as reported in the latest Direct Certification Report to Congress, must present a compelling case in their application proposals as to why improvements in their direct certification system or processes are necessary for them to maintain rates at or above the mandated 95 percent benchmark. (The Reports to Congress can be viewed at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/ora/MENU/Published/CNP/cnp.htm>).
3. FNS will accept **only one grant application** from any State agency under this RFA. However, if funds remain available at the end of the RFA period (July 1, 2013), FNS reserves the right to extend the RFA and reconsider this application restriction at that time.

Non-Competitive

Grant awards under this RFA will not be competitive as long as sufficient funding is available to fund all fully responsive applications with potential to significantly improve direct certification performance. If sufficient funding is not available to award grants to all applicants, FNS reserves the right to give preference to applications from States with the lowest direct certification rates with SNAP, as reported in the latest Direct Certification Report to Congress. Preference also may be given based on the amount of grant funding already awarded to the applicant agencies for direct certification improvement purposes under the 2010 Direct Certification Grant RFA announced in July 2010 (see <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Grants/Grants2012.htm>). FNS reserves the right to close the RFA and accept no further applications at any point that available funds are exhausted.

IMPORTANT: The CND grants website at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/grants.htm> will be updated to indicate closure of the RFA if grant funds are exhausted before July 1, 2014 (the final application deadline). If this occurs, the closure information will display as a notice on this public website. **Potential applicants should check the website to ensure that funds are available before submitting an application.**

IV. CRITICAL DATES AND AWARD PERIODS

A. Critical Dates

1. **Tier 1 Grants – Simplified Application:** There will be **four** application deadlines for Tier 1 grants in fiscal year 2014, all on the first workday of the given month—***October 1, 2013; January 2, 2014; April 1, 2014; and July 1, 2014.*** Applications received after ***July 1, 2014*** will not be considered for awards. FNS will process Tier 1 applications within approximately 45 days from the application deadline by which it was received.
2. **Tier 2 Grants – Full Application:** There will be **four** application deadlines for Tier 2 grants in fiscal year 2014, all on the first workday of the given month—***October 1, 2013; January 2, 2014; April 1, 2014; and July 1, 2014.*** Applications received after ***July 1, 2014*** will not be considered for awards. FNS will process Tier 2 applications to make awards within approximately 90 days from the application deadline by which it was received.

FNS reserves the right to close this RFA at any time that available funds are exhausted.

B. Award Periods

The award period for the FY 2013 Tier 1 grants will be as follows, beginning from the date of the award:

- Tier 1 limited-scope grants will be awarded for ***up to one year***; and
- Tier 2 full-scope implementation grants will be awarded for ***one to three*** years.

All grant funds must be obligated and all program activities under the grant (other than activities relating to the close out of the grant) must be completed by the end of award period. The close out of the grant must occur no later than 90 days following the end of the award period, and all obligations incurred under the grant must be liquidated by this date. Any funds that are not liquidated within 90 days following the end of the award period must be returned to FNS. In addition, the final progress reports are due to FNS no later than 90 days following the end of the award period. Please see **Section IX, Administrative Requirements and Terms and Conditions**, for additional reporting requirements.

V. HOW TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION FOR FUNDING

Applicants may obtain the RFA package by downloading the application from the FNS website <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/grants.htm> or by downloading the application from the “Grants.gov” website at <http://www.grants.gov/>. Applications submitted via mail service, facsimile or e-mail **will not be considered** for funding.

State agencies have the option of applying for either a Tier 1 grant or a Tier 2 grant, but not both. **Only one grant application in response to this solicitation will be accepted from any State agency during the application deadlines in fiscal year 2014—October 1, 2013 through July 1, 2014.**

Tier 1 and Tier 2 applications (see *Appendices C and D* for narrative proposal templates) may be submitted to **Grants.gov** for four application deadlines. Applications must be received by **11:59 pm eastern time** on the application due date. Applications submitted after a given deadline will be held and processed with those received at the next deadline. **Applications received after the July 1, 2014 deadline will not be processed.** The application deadline schedule for Tier 1 and Tier 2 applications is as follows:

- October 1, 2013
- January 2, 2014
- April 1, 2014
- July 1, 2014

Electronic Submission

The complete application must be uploaded on the Grants.gov website at www.grants.gov by 11:59 PM, eastern time on an application deadline date, as provided in the schedule above. Applications submitted after a given deadline will be held and processed with those received at the next deadline (if funds remain available). **Applications received after the July 1, 2014, the final deadline for applications,** will be deemed ineligible and will not be reviewed or considered. FNS will not consider any additions or revisions to an application once it is received. FNS will not accept mailed, faxed, or hand-delivered applications.

In order to submit your application via www.grants.gov, you must have obtained a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and registered in both the new Systems for Award Management (SAM) and on Grants.gov. The applicant is strongly advised to allow ample time to initiate its grants.gov application submission. All applicants must have current CCR status at the time of application submission and throughout the duration of a Federal Award in accordance with 2 CFR Part 25. Please visit the following websites to obtain additional information on how to obtain a DUNS number (www.dnb.com) and register in SAM (<https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>).

What is SAM?

The System for Award Management (SAM) is combining federal procurement systems and the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance into one new system. This consolidation is being done in phases. The first phase of SAM incorporated the functionality from several systems, including the Central Contractor Registry (CCR).

For additional information regarding SAM see the following link:

https://www.acquisition.gov/SAM_Guides/Quick%20Guide%20for%20Grants%20Registrations%20v1.pdf

Below is some additional information that should assist the applicant through this process:

DUNS Number: In order to obtain a DUNS number, if your organization does not have one, or if you are unsure of your organization's number you can contact Dun and Bradstreet via the internet at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform> or by calling 1-888-814-1435, Monday thru Friday, 8am-9pm EST. There is no fee associated with obtaining a DUNS number. Obtaining a DUNS number may take several days to obtain.

SAM Registration: If you were registered in the CCR, your organization's information is already in SAM and you will just need to set up a SAM account to update any information. To register in SAM you will need both your organization's DUNS and your entity's Tax ID Number (TIN) and taxpayer name (as it appears on your last tax return). Registration should take 3-5 days. **If you do not receive confirmation that your SAM registration is complete, please contact SAM at <https://www.fsd.gov/app/answers/list>.**

Grants.gov Registration: In order to apply for a grant, your organization must have completed the above registrations as well as register on Grants.gov. The Grants.gov registration process can be accessed at www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp. Generally, the registration process takes between 3-5 business days.

If you are a new Grants.gov user, please ensure that your organization's Point of Contact (POC) has designated you as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR). **If you are not designated as an AOR, you will be unable to submit your application into Grants.gov.** Allow your entity ample time to complete the necessary steps for the submission of your grant application package on grants.gov.

All questions regarding the application and electronic submission notification should be referred to the FNS Grant Officer, Carla Garcia via e-mail at Carla.Garcia@fns.usda.gov. ***Please be aware that the grants.gov system provides several confirmation notices; you need to be sure that you have confirmation that the application was accepted. If the applicant has not received confirmation of a successful submission or needs technical assistance; please contact the Grants.gov helpline at 1-800-518-4726 or email the help desk at support@grants.gov.***

VI. WHAT TO INCLUDE IN THE APPLICATION PACKAGE

To be considered complete, Direct Certification Improvement Grant applications must include all the required documents and information listed in the following sections for the specific type of grant -- Tier 1 or Tier 2.

A. **Tier 1: Limited-Scope Planning and Implementation Grant Applications**

To be considered complete, application packages for Tier 1 grants must include all information listed in the following table. Failure to provide any item on the list could result in your application being removed from competition.

Table 1 – Checklist for TIER 1 Simplified Application Package		
Grant Type	Application Due Dates (if funds remain available)	Maximum per Award
TIER 1 – Simplified Application for Limited-Scope Planning & Implementation Grants	October 1, 2013 April 1, 2014 January 2, 2014 July 1, 2014	\$150,000

Required Documents and Information	Explanation
<p>1. Tier 1: Limited-Scope Grant Proposal Template (or similar format) - <i>Appendix C</i></p> <p>12-page limit for responses to Questions 1-6k</p> <p>Make sure pages are numbered</p>	<p>For a Tier 1 grant project proposal narrative to be considered complete, applicants must structure and develop their proposal narrative by completing the Cover Page and answering all questions listed in <i>Appendix C: Tier 1 Limited-Scope Grant Proposal Template & Instructions</i>.</p> <p><u>Applicants should address all questions in the order they are listed.</u> The instructions are intended to simplify both the narrative development for applicants and the evaluation process for reviewers.</p> <p>See <i>Appendix A</i> for link to OMB Cost Principles at 2 CFR 225.</p>
2. Form SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance	Link to form at http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/grants.htm
3. Form SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs	Link to form at http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/grants.htm
4. Form SF-424B, Assurances – Non-Construction Programs	Link to form at http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/grants.htm
5. Form SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	Link to form at http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/grants.htm
6. Indirect Cost Rate Agreement	If Indirect Costs are included in the budget, applicants must provide a copy of their agency's signed Indirect Cost Rate Agreement with a Federal agency.
7. Justification for Sole Source Contracts	If contractual costs are included in the budget estimate and the contractor is (or will be) acquired without competition, the applicant must provide a justification for a sole source contract with copies/references to State statutes, regulations and policies that support the sole source decision.

B. Tier 2: Full-Scope Implementation Grant Applications

To be considered complete, application packages for Tier 2 grants must include all information listed in the following table. Failure to provide any item on the list could result in your application being removed from competition.

Table 2 – Checklist for TIER 2 Full Application Package		
Grant Type	Application Due Date (if funds remain available)	Maximum per Award
TIER 2 Application for Full-Scope Implementation Grants	October 1, 2013 January 2, 2014 April 1, 2014 July 1, 2014	\$1,000,000

Required Documents and Information	Explanation
<p>1. Tier 2: Full-Scope Implementation Grant Proposal Template (or similar format) – <i>Appendix D</i></p> <p>35-page limit for responses to Questions 1-22</p> <p>Make sure pages are numbered</p>	<p>For Tier 2 implementation project proposal narrative to be considered complete, applicants must structure and develop their project proposal by completing the Cover Page and answering all questions in <i>Appendix D: Tier 2 Full-Scope Implementation Grant Proposal Template & Instructions</i>.</p> <p>The template is designed to guide applicants in thinking through all aspects of proposed solutions, with particular emphasis on reducing risks associated with technology related aspects of their proposals prior to the grant award. Applicants should address all questions in the order they are listed.</p> <p>See <i>Appendix A</i> for link to OMB Cost Principles at 2 CFR 225.</p>
<p>2. Form SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance</p>	<p>Link to form at http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/grants.htm</p>
<p>1. Form SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs</p>	<p>Link to form at http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/grants.htm</p>
<p>4. Form SF-424B, Assurances – Non-Construction Programs</p>	<p>Link to form at http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/grants.htm</p>
<p>5. Form SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities</p>	<p>Link to form at http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/grants.htm</p>
<p>6. Indirect Cost Rate Agreement</p>	<p>If Indirect Costs are included in the budget, applicants must provide a copy of their agency’s signed Indirect Cost Rate Agreement with a Federal agency.</p>
<p>7. Justification for Sole Source Contracts</p>	<p>If Contractual costs are included in budget estimate and the contractor is (or will be) acquired without competition, the applicant must provide a justification for a sole source contract with copies/references to State statutes, regulations and policies that support the sole source decision.</p>

VII. APPLICATION FORMAT

Applications should meet the following formatting guidelines:

1. **12-page** maximum length for **Tier 1** grant narrative response to questions **Appendix C**;
2. **35-page** maximum length for **Tier 2** grant narrative response to **Appendix D**;
3. Page restrictions apply only to content of the narrative proposals (i.e., responses to questions in Appendix C and Appendix D, not including instructions and cover pages) and do not apply to other required forms and supporting documents, such as the SF-424,

SF-424A, SF-424B, SF-LLL, indirect cost rate agreement, resumes, letters of support, and assurance forms);

4. 8 ½” by 11” paper;
5. 12 point Times New Roman or Arial font size (smaller font may be used in tables, charts and graphs as long as they are clearly readable);
6. Numbered pages.

VIII. APPLICATION REVIEW AND GRANT AWARD PROCESS

FNS will evaluate the applications in accordance with the criteria outlined in this section to select applications for awards. The actual number of awards will depend on the quality of the applications and the availability of funds. Funds will be made available via a Cooperative Agreement award document following the award announcements.

A. Initial Screening

FNS will screen all applications to ensure they are eligible and fully responsive. Eligible and responsive applications are those that meet the following requirements:

1. Submitted by eligible applicants (see **Section III, Who May Apply**);
2. Submitted on or before the required deadline (see **Section IV, Critical Dates and Award Periods**);
3. Are complete (see **Section VI, What to Include in the Application Package**); and
4. Are in the required format (see **Section VII, Application Format**).

Ineligible or nonresponsive applications **will be removed from further consideration** for grant funds. Thereafter, FNS will review and consider eligible applications in accordance with the evaluation process described in the following paragraphs.

B. Panel Review

After initial screening, FNS will convene an evaluation panel of FNS staff to consider the merit of each grant application. Each application that passes initial screening will be given to the panel to be evaluated as to how well it addresses each application component. The panel will determine if all questions are addressed adequately and identify any areas that need further clarification. If further clarification is needed to determine the merit of the application, FNS will notify the applicant in writing and describe any information that is needed to make the award decision. Applicants will be given an opportunity to provide additional information and documentation needed to clarify the proposal content.

1. Evaluation of Tier 1 Proposals (Simplified application for funding up to \$150,000)

The panel review for Tier 1 applications will focus, at a minimum, on the following components:

- **Project Purpose and Impact on Direct Certification**

- The significance of the problem(s) to be addressed is clearly demonstrated and proposed activities are appropriate to address the problem(s) identified.
 - The project goals and objectives are in line with the purpose of the funding described in ***Section I-B, Purpose of Grant Funding.***
 - The project activities to be completed during the grant period clearly support sustainable improvements that will likely increase direct certification rates with SNAP (and other public programs, if applicable). Proposed activities are in line with the examples given for Tier 1 projects in ***Section II-A, Tier 1: Limited-Scope Planning and Implementation Project.***
- **Project Timeline and Sustainability**
 - The scope and timeline proposed for the project are reasonable and attainable during the proposed grant time frame.
 - The applicant demonstrates that the State agency has the capacity to implement and sustain the program improvements resulting from the grant activities after the Direct Certification Improvement Grant funding ends.
- **Budget Plan**
 - The proposal includes a completed Form SF-424A.
 - A line item budget narrative which demonstrates how funds will be spent, by, whom and for what purpose.
 - The total funding amount requested is appropriate for the scope of the project;
 - Proposed costs are reasonable, necessary, allowable and allocable to carry out the project's goals and objectives;
 - The budget includes a line item description for every estimated cost and shows how it supports the project goals.
 - Budget calculations and documentation show clearly how the budget components were developed and costs estimated.
 - If indirect costs are included in the budget expenses, the applicant agency's Indirect Cost Rate Agreement with a Federal agency is provided and the indirect cost rate is applied correctly to allowable direct costs.
 - If contractual costs are included in budget estimate and the contractor is (or will be) acquired without competition, the applicant has provided strong justification for a sole source contract with copies/references to State statutes, regulations and policies that support the sole source decision.
 - If applicable, the budget must show how the costs are allocated among the benefiting programs, and demonstrate that this grant is only going to fund its share.
 - There should be adequate justification for budget costs based on current industry costs/standards. If necessary, information on costs should be obtained from applicable organizations or from online sources.

- The proposal is cost effective – it demonstrates that the anticipated results are commensurate with the cost of the project.

2. Evaluation of Tier 2 Proposals (Full application for funding up to \$1,000,000)

The panel review for Tier 2 applications will focus, at a minimum, on the following components:

- **Project Purpose, Goals and Impact on Direct Certification**

- The significance of the problem(s) to be addressed is clearly demonstrated and proposed implementation activities are appropriate to address the problem(s) identified.
- The project goals and objectives are in line with the purpose of the funding described in *Section I-B, Purpose of Grant Funding*.
- The project activities to be completed during the grant period clearly support sustainable improvements that will likely increase direct certification rates with SNAP (and other public programs, if applicable). Proposed activities are in line with the examples given for Tier 2 projects in *Section II-B, Full-Scope Implementation Projects*.
- The performance measures used to assess success are realistic, measureable and clearly defined.

- **Project Planning, Design and Management**

- The project organization, project management approach (including staffing, procurement of contractors, communications planning, quality assurance planning, risk management planning, system development lifecycle process planning where applicable, partnering with appropriate stakeholders, tracking timelines, measuring performance, monitoring progress, etc.) indicate that the applicant has the capacity to manage and execute the implementation project successfully to meet the goals of the project.
- The scope and timeline proposed for the project are reasonable and attainable during the grant time frame.

- **Budget Plan**

- The total funding amount requested is appropriate for the scope of the project;
- Proposed costs are reasonable, necessary, allowable and allocable to carry out the project's goals and objectives;
- The budget includes a line item description for every estimated cost and shows how it supports the project goals.
- Budget calculations and documentation show clearly how the budget components were developed and costs estimated.
- If indirect costs are included, the applicant agency's Indirect Cost Rate Agreement with a Federal agency is provided and the indirect cost rate is applied correctly to allowable direct costs.

- If contractual costs are included in budget estimate and the contractor is (or will be) acquired without competition, the applicant has provided strong justification for a sole source contract with copies/references to State statutes, regulations and policies that support the sole source decision.
- **Sustainability and Transferability**
 - The proposed implementation project is likely to produce outcomes and information that not only will aid the applicant State agency in accomplishing direct certification improvements, but also will produce knowledge that is transferable to other State agencies for similar improvement projects.
 - The applicant demonstrates that the State agency has the capacity to implement and sustain the program improvements resulting from the grant activities after the Direct Certification Improvement Grant funding ends.

C. Selection for Awards

Grant awards under this RFA will not be competitive as long as sufficient funding is available to fund all fully responsive applications. If sufficient funding is not available to award grants to all applicants, FNS reserves the right to give preference to applications from States with the lowest direct certification rates with SNAP, as reported in the latest Direct Certification Report to Congress. Preference also may be given based on the amount of grant funding already awarded to the applicant agencies for direct certification improvement purposes under the 2010 Direct Certification Grant RFA announced in July 2010 (see <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Grants/Grants2012.htm>).

The Selection Official has ultimate authority to decide which applications are approved and funded, and *generally* will adhere to the recommendations made by the reviewers, provided that funding is available. However, the Selection Official reserves the right to deviate from those recommendations to take other factors into account when granting awards and/or not awarding a particular award. Other USDA or FNS priorities the Selection Official may consider include, *but are not limited to*: the innovation demonstrated in an application; agency priorities; and the evaluation by the technical review panel.

Note: FNS may request additional information from the grantee or require the grantee to complete additional forms at any time during the grant solicitation process.

D. Determination of Award Amounts

As part of the technical review process, FNS will review applicants' budgets to ensure that all costs are reasonable, necessary, allowable and allocable to the purposes of this RFA. Applications selected and approved for funding with budgets that are realistic, well justified, and supported will likely be funded at the requested amounts. However, FNS reserves the right to fund applications out of rank order to achieve priorities identified earlier; or at lesser amounts if FNS determines that the project can be implemented with less funding; or at lesser amounts if Federal funding is not sufficient to fully fund all applications that merit awards. This is subject to availability of funds.

FNS will review and consider the merit of each grant application and reserves the right to fund only those applications that are able to demonstrate the applicant's capability to

improve their State's direct certification processes and rates. Additionally, FNS may adjust the amounts requested in the application to ensure that funds are made available at appropriate levels. FNS also reserves the right to suspend or terminate an award for materially failing to perform in accordance with a State agency's application.

IX. ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS AND TERMS AND CONDITIONS

A. Administrative Requirements

The grant program will be awarded and administered in accordance with the following Federal and program regulations and the corresponding OMB Circulars.

Reporting Sub-award and Executive Compensation Information 2 CFR Part 170:

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) of 2006 (Public Law 109–282), as amended by Section 6202 of Public Law 110–252 requires primary grantees of Federal grants and cooperative agreements to report information on sub-grantee obligations and executive compensation. FFATA promotes open government by enhancing the Federal Government's accountability for its stewardship of public resources. This is accomplished by making Government information, particularly information on Federal spending, accessible to the general public. Primary grantees, including State agencies, are required to report actions taken on or after October 1, 2010, that obligates \$25,000 or more in Federal grant funds to first- tier sub-grantees. This information must be reported in the Government-wide FFATA Sub-Award Reporting System (FSRS). In order to access FSRS a current CCR registration is required. A primary grantee and first-tier sub-grantees must also report total compensation for each of its five most highly compensated executives. Every primary and first-tier grantee must obtain a DUNS number prior to being eligible to receive a grant or sub-grant award. Additional information will be provided to grant recipients upon award.

Reporting Sub-award and Executive Compensation Information 2 CFR Part 170:

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) of 2006 (Public Law 109–282), as amended by Section 6202 of Public Law 110–252 requires primary grantees of Federal grants and cooperative agreements to report information on sub-grantee obligations and executive compensation. FFATA promotes open government by enhancing the Federal Government's accountability for its stewardship of public resources. This is accomplished by making Government information, particularly information on Federal spending, accessible to the general public. Primary grantees, including State agencies, are required to report actions taken on or after October 1, 2010, that obligates \$25,000 or more in Federal grant funds to first- tier sub-grantees. This information must be reported in the Government-wide FFATA Sub-Award Reporting System (FSRS). In order to access FSRS a current CCR registration is required. A primary grantee and first-tier sub-grantees must also report total compensation for each of its five most highly compensated executives. Every primary and first-tier grantee must obtain a DUNS number prior to being eligible to receive a grant or sub-grant award. Additional information will be provided to grant recipients upon award

Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2009, Public Law 110-417 Section 872 of this Act requires the development and maintenance of a Federal Government information system that contains specific information on the integrity and

performance of covered Federal agency contractors and grantees. The Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) was developed to address these requirements. FAPIIS contains integrity and performance information from the Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System, information from the CCR database, and suspension and debarment information from the EPLS. FNS will review and consider any information about the applicant reflected in FAPIIS when making a judgment about whether an applicant is qualified to receive an award.

1. Government-wide Regulations

- CFR Part 215: (formerly OMB Circular A-21) Cost Principles for Educational Institutions;
- 2 CFR Part 225: (formerly OMB Circular A-87) Cost Principles for State and Local Governments;
- 2 CFR Part 230:(formerly OMB Circular A-122) Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations;
- 2 CFR Part 175: Award Terms for Trafficking in Person;
- 2 CFR Part 25: Universal Identifier and Central Contractor Registration;
- 2 CFR Part 170: Reporting Subaward and Executive Compensation;
- Title 17 Government wide Requirement for Drug-free workplace, US Code Title 41, Chapter 10, Sect 702. Drug-Free Workplace Requirements;
- 2 CFR Part 175: “Trafficking in Persons: Grants and Cooperative Agreements”;
- 2 CFR Part 175: “Trafficking in Persons: Grants and Cooperative Agreements”;
- 2 CFR Part 180: “Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-Procurement)”;
- 2 CFR Part 417: “USDA Non-procurement Debarment and Suspension.”

2. USDA Regulations

- 7 CFR Part 3015: Uniform Federal Assistance Requirements implementing OMB directives (2 CFR 225, OMB Circular A-87, Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments, see Appendix A for link);
- 7 CFR Part 3016: Uniform Federal Assistance Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments;
- 7 CFR Part 3018: Restrictions on Lobbying;
- 7 CFR Part 3021: Government-wide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance);
- 7 CFR Part 3052: (OMB Circular A-133) Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations; and
- 7 CFR Part 15: Discrimination; Civil Rights

3. Confidentiality of an Application

When an application results in an award, it becomes a part of the record of FNS transactions, available to the public upon specific request. Information that the Secretary

determines to be of a confidential, privileged, or proprietary nature will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, any information that the applicant wishes to have considered as confidential, privileged, or proprietary should be clearly marked within the application. The original copy of an application that does not result in an award will not be released to the public.

B. Funding

In addition to the administrative requirements mentioned above, the provisions below will also be a part of the agreement between FNS and the State agency.

1. Funds authorized cannot be used to replace existing funding (e.g. State Administrative Expense (SAE) funds) earmarked by the State agency for administrative review, oversight and training.
2. Current expenditures of State and local funds for the operation of school nutrition programs shall not be diminished as a result of receipt of funds to implement direct certification improvements.
3. Funds cannot be used to shift existing staff from their normal duties paid with SAE funds to support the grant activities unless the staff that are reassigned are replaced with additional staff in the positions that are vacant.
4. Funds must be used for FNS approved Direct Certification Improvement grant project activities for the purpose of improving direct certification processes and rates.

C. Assurances and Disclosures

1. Applicants must provide assurance that they are neither suspended nor debarred prior to FNS making an award.
2. Applicants chosen for award will also be required to ensure that all sub-contractors and sub-grantees are neither excluded nor disqualified under the suspension and debarment rules found at 7 CFR Sec. 3017.300 by doing any **one** of the following:
 - Checking the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) found at www.epls.gov
 - Collecting a certification that the entity is neither excluded nor disqualified.
 - Since a Federal certification form is no longer available, the grantee or sub-grantee electing this method must devise its own; and include a clause to this effect in the sub-grant agreement and in any procurement contract expected to equal or exceed \$25,000 awarded by the grantee or a sub-grantee under its grant or sub-grant.

***Note:** Sub-grantee and contractor must obtain a DUNS Number and register it in the Central Contractor Register (CCR). All Federal Government awards are required to have a DUNS number. To obtain a DUNS number, contact Dun and Bradstreet at 1-866-705-5711 or visit their website at <https://eupdate.dnb.com/requestoptions.asp>. There is no charge for a DUNS number. The DUNS number serves as a means of tracking and identifying applications for Federal assistance and is required on all applications for

Federal assistance. The applicant must register its DUNS number in the Central Contractor Register (CCR). CCR registration instructions can be found at:

The System for Award Management (SAM) is combining federal procurement systems and the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance into one new system. This consolidation is being done in phases. The first phase of SAM incorporated the functionality from several systems, including the Central Contractor Registry (CCR).

3. If chosen, the applicant must also agree to make a good faith effort, on a continuing basis, to (A) maintain a drug-free workplace (including taking specific actions described at 7 CFR Sec. 3021.200 through 3021.230); and (B) identify all workplace locations where work under Federal award will be performed (7 CFR Sec. 3021.200). Since Federal entities will no longer collect a paper certification, this may include the following:
 - Notifying all sub-grantees and contractors of the Drug Free Workplace rules,
 - Making conforming changes to your internal procedures, directives, training materials, etc., and
 - Incorporating the new rules into your sub-grantee monitoring practices.

D. Reporting

All State agencies receiving funds for FY 2013 Direct Certification Improvement grants are required to submit the following reports in accordance with the deadlines noted:

1. **Quarterly Financial Reports.** Grantees will be required to submit quarterly SF-425 financial reports and a final SF-425 financial report electronically via the FNS “Food Programs Reporting System” (FPRS). In order to access FPRS, SAs are required to have USDA e-authentication to access FPRS. Further instructions regarding data entry into FPRS, the reporting format and dates will be provided to those receiving awards.
2. **Quarterly Progress Reports.** The Quarterly Progress Reports must include (**in narrative form**): 1) a brief description of the planned activities for the report period; 2) accomplishments for each activity and completion dates; 3) a description of any deviations from the approved plan—this summary should discuss difficulties encountered and solutions developed; 4) any other unique aspects that would be useful to share; and 5) an overview of plans for the coming quarter. A Progress Report must be submitted quarterly. In addition, a final progress report is due to FNS no later than 90 days following the end of the award period. Completion dates and the process for reporting will be provided to those receiving awards.
3. Copies of any deliverables, media or publicity releases/articles and links to materials on websites also should be included or papers resulting from the grant should be attached to the final report. All products should include an acknowledgement of the source of funding. The Federal awarding agency reserves a royalty-free, non-exclusive, and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish or otherwise use, and to authorize others to use, for Federal Government purposes, the copyright in any work developed under a grant, sub-grant, or contract under a grant or sub-grant or any rights of copyright to which a grantee, sub-grantee, or a contractor purchases ownership with grant support.

X. CHECKLIST FOR THE APPLICATION PACKAGE

The application package must be submitted through www.grants.gov and include the following required forms:

1. Responses to questions in the Application Template (Appendix C for Tier 1 grants, Appendix D for Tier 2 Grants);
2. Standard Form 424, Application for Federal Assistance;
3. Standard Form 424A, Budget Information
4. Standard Form 424B, Assurances – Non Construction Programs;
5. Form SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
6. The Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)
7. Justification for sole source contracts (if applicable)

Application Review Checklist:

All proposals submitted under this RFA must contain the applicable elements as described in this announcement. The application must be submitted electronically through www.grants.gov, according to the time frames in Section V. The following checklist has been prepared to assist in ensuring that the proposal is complete and in the proper order prior to submission.

- ✓ Read the RFA carefully, usually more than once.
- ✓ Have you obtained a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and registered the number into the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) system?
- ✓ Have you prepared and submitted the appropriate forms as shown above?
- ✓ Did you enter the correct RFA CFDA # **10.579**?
- ✓ Have you included your contact information: telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address?
- ✓ Have you addressed, met, and considered any program specific requirements or restrictions?
- ✓ Is the project's proposal clearly stated?
 - Does it comply with any format requirements,
 - Does it comply with the page limitation, and
 - Most important does it directly relate to the RFA's objectives and priorities?
 - Don't assume that reviewers know anything about your organization and its work.
- ✓ Have one or more persons, other than the writers, read your proposal? Was it clear to them?
- ✓ Does the proposed project proposal and budget meet the bona fide needs of the RFA?
- ✓ Is the budget summary included?
 - Does it agree with the calculations shown on the budget form SF-424A?

- Is the budget in line with the project description?
- Review ***Appendix B: Grant Project Budget Checklist***
- ✓ Be sure to submit a timely application into www.grants.gov in order to meet the RFA application deadline.
- ✓ FNS reserves the right to request additional information not clearly addressed.

APPENDIX A: LINKS TO RESOURCES

A. OMB Cost Principles 2 CFR 225

Link to 2 CFR 225, OMB Cost Principles for State, Local and Tribal Governments (also referenced as OMB Circular A-87):

http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/fedreg/2005/083105_a87.pdf

B. FY 2010-2012 Direct Certification Grant Summaries

http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Grants/2010dc_grantsummaries.htm

C. Request for Applications and Standard Application Forms SF-424, SF-424A, SF-424B, SF-LLL

CND Grants Website: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/grants.htm>

Grants.Gov: <http://www.grants.gov/>

D. 2012 Direct Certification Report to Congress

Direct Certification in the National School Lunch Program: State Implementation Progress School Year 2011-2012: Report to Congress - October 2012

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/ora/menu/Published/CNP/FILES/DirectCert2012.pdf>

E. Child Nutrition Division's PartnerWeb Policy Community

<https://www.eapartnerweb.usda.gov/communities/cndpolicy2/default.aspx>

APPENDIX B: GRANT PROJECT BUDGET CHECKLIST

BUDGET CHECKLIST	YES	NO
This budget checklist should be used in the development of a grant. NOTE: The proposed project budget must align with the activities outlined in the proposal. FNS reserves the right to request information not clearly addressed in the proposal and or budget.		
PERSONNEL		
Did you include all key employees paid for by this grant under this heading?		
Are employees of the applicant's organization identified by name and position title?		
Did you reflect the current yearly salary as a percentage of time to be devoted to the project?		
FRINGE BENEFITS		
Did you include your organization's fringe benefit amount along with the basis for the computation?		
Did you list the type of fringe benefits to be covered with Federal funds?		
TRAVEL		
Are travel expenses itemized? For example origination/destination points, number and purpose of trips, number of staff traveling, mode of transportation and cost of each trip.		
Are the Attendee Objectives and travel justifications included in the narrative?		
Is the basis for the lodging estimates identified in the budget? For example include excerpt from travel regulations.		
EQUIPMENT		
Is the need for the equipment justified in the narrative?		
Are the types of equipment, unit costs, and the number of items to be purchased listed in the budget?		
Is the basis for the cost per item or other basis of computation stated in the budget?		
SUPPLIES		
Are the types of supplies, unit costs, and the number of items to be purchased reflected in the budget?		
Is the basis for the costs per item or other basis of computation stated?		
CONTRACTUAL: (FNS reserves the right to request information on all contractual and sub-grant awards associated costs after a contract or sub-grant is awarded.)		
Are the products to be acquired or the professional services to be funded described in the budget?		
Has the justification for the need to contract or subgrant been included in the budget?		
For professional services, are the hours to be devoted to the project and the amounts to be charged to the project clearly stated?		
Is the methodology on how the applicant determined the contractual costs included in the budget?		

BUDGET CHECKLIST	YES	NO
Are there sole-source contracts listed under this heading? If so, has sufficient justification, including references to related State statutes and regulations, been provided in order to approve the use of a single source without competition?		
Do your estimates for contractual costs include your contractor's preparation and participation in FNS onsite State visits for evaluation and technical assistance purposes?		
Consultant Services: All associated costs must be clearly related to the consulting services and the proposal. Details to justify the costs should include: a description of services being considered; an itemized list of all potential direct cost and fees, including labor estimates; number of personnel including related position titles; and specialized qualifications as appropriate.		
OTHER		
For all other line items listed under the "Other" heading, list all items to be covered under this heading along with the methodology on how the applicant derived the costs to be charged to the program.		
INDIRECT COSTS		
Are indirect costs included in the estimated budget? If so, is the amount requested based upon a rate approved by a Federal Agency? If yes, a signed copy of the negotiated rate agreement must be provided along with the application.		